

REMARKS

In the Final Office Action identified above, the Examiner rejected claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph; and rejected claims 1-3, 19, and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Liu et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,349,257) in view of Brems et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,566,272).

I. The Rejection of Claim 3 Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. However, to expedite prosecution, Applicants propose amending claim 3 . Support for this amendment is provided in the specification at, for example, page 15, line 11-page 16, line 16. These sections of the specification state:

In the above identified embodiment, object vocabulary of speech recognition includes the position coordinate on the map. However, in general, the object vocabulary of speech recognition does not include the position coordinate ...[I]n order to cope with the case that the recognition result is the vocabulary not including the position coordinate, a position coordinate flag PF is attached to all vocabulary of a recognition result as an attribute of the vocabulary ...If the vocabulary does not include the position data, the distance decision section ... sets the distance decision flag DF as the second status. In this case ... the response generation section 16 outputs a pair of confirmation messages and the recognition result to the control section 13.

Applicants submit that at least the above-quoted section of Applicants' specification provide support for the step of "if the recognition result is a vocabulary not including a position coordinate on the map, outputting at least the recognition result," as recited in claim 3. Therefore, Applicants submit that claim 3 fully meets the requirements of 35 U.S.C § 112, first paragraph. As a result, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 112.

II. The Rejection of Claim 1-3, 19, and 21 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-3, 19, and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Liu et al. in view of Brems et al. Applicants wish to thank Examiner Lerner for allowing Applicants' representatives to discuss the rejection during a telephonic conversation on March 21, 2005. The Examiner confirmed that the appropriate translation documents for establishing foreign priority had been filed on October 20, 2003. Therefore, the Examiner stated that the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) would be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

In accordance with the Examiner's suggestions, Applicants reiterate that the proper English language translation of Applicants' prior Japanese patent application was filed on October 20, 2003. Applicants' Japanese patent application P11-185859 has an effective date of June 30, 1999. This is earlier than the effective date of Liu et al., namely, September 15, 1999. Therefore, Liu et al. is not prior art to the application. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejections of claims 1-3, 19, and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) and to allow the claims.

III. Conclusion

Applicants respectfully request that this Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 be entered by the Examiner, placing claims 1-3, 19, and 21 in condition for allowance. Applicants submit that the proposed amendments of claim 3 does not raise new issues or necessitate the undertaking of any additional search of the art by the Examiner, since all of the elements and their relationships were claimed earlier. Therefore, this Amendment should allow for immediate action by the Examiner.

Finally, Applicants submit that the entry of the amendment would place the application in better form for appeal, should the Examiner dispute the patentability of the pending claims.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge
any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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